

# Eight killed using mobility scooters

**Mark Hookham, Transport Correspondent**

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Mobility scooters were involved in four crashes a week on Britain's roads last year, resulting in eight riders being killed, new figures show.

The number of accidents involving the scooters that were reported to police increased by 6% to 222 in 2015 compared with 2014, according to an analysis of government data by Mapmechanics, a digital mapping company.

Twenty-three mobility scooter riders were killed in accidents between 2011 and 2015 and 490 were injured.



Pensioner drives mobility scooter on an A-road

A total of 28 pedestrians were seriously injured after being hit by mobility scooters on the pavement or while crossing roads during the past five years and another 100 slightly injured.

Twelve cyclists, eight motorcyclists and a horse rider were also injured in collisions with mobility scooters, which have a top speed of 8mph and are used by an estimated 350,000 people.

In April Gwendoline Copping, a 94-year-old widow, died when she was hit by a Land Rover while crossing a road in Folkestone, Kent, on her mobility scooter.

Last week video footage of a woman riding a mobility scooter around a notorious six-road roundabout in Chesterfield, Derbyshire, was shared and viewed tens of thousands of times on social media.

About 80,000 mobility scooters are sold each year, with sales growing by up to 10% a year.

Most accidents involving the vehicles are believed to involve tipping over on uneven pavements or slopes but the analysis shows significant numbers also involve other road users and pedestrians.

The town with the highest number of mobility scooter accidents last year was Portsmouth with six crashes.

“The use of mobility scooters is only likely to grow as the baby-boomer generation moves into old age and with rising levels of obesity across all generations affecting personal mobility,” said David Cockrell, director of Mapmechanics.

Mobility scooters must be registered and need to be fitted with lights, indicators and a horn to be legally permitted to drive on roads.

The speed limit for riding on the pavements is 4mph. Some can be used on dual carriageways if fitted with a flashing amber warning light.

Kevin Clinton, the head of road safety at the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (Rospa), said the figures were worrying, adding: “Rospa believes that the best ways to prevent these casualties is to improve the quality and availability of guidance and training for mobility scooter users, manufacturers and retailers.”

[@markhookham](#)

15 comments

Keith Davis

“The use of mobility scooters is only likely to grow as the baby-boomer generation moves into old age”

Baby boomers guilty again - jeez

Mr K Miller

Autonomous cars will struggle to cope with british road conditions while maintaining a decent pace. However, mobility scooters are a better bet. They travel slowly and their owners will value being slow and steady and mobile.

barbara stevens

Some quite heavy people use these scooters, , some of the scooters have large wheels to accommodate the heaviness of the user, these type of scooters should not be used on pedestrian pavements. I say this after one of them backed on to my foot, I was in agony for weeks. The driver rode off not knowing what damage he had done.

Graham W

Unfortunately all good ideas are wrecked by the stupid and irresponsible.

Able-bodied using wheel chairs to get to the front of the queue at airports, fit people using disability parking spaces etc.

There are many that do not give a damn about anyone other than themselves. Hence the abuse of facilities to help the disabled.

Wondering

I find it hard to believe that able-bodied people use wheelchairs to get to the front of the queue at airports. As someone who needs help at airports, I can assure you that it is tedious and tiresome having to wait for someone to come and wheel the chair through, I have waited up to an hour at times; usually having to wait until everyone else is off the plane before I can get off; etc. etc.

Also, how do you know they are able-bodied. As someone with a heart condition, both my husband and myself look fine to other people, but the reality is that we are both significantly disabled when it comes to walking any distance or climbing steps up to a plane.

Helen LB

@Wondering You would be amazed, unfortunately. My husband and I were once returning from holiday and were surprised to see

our able-bodied next-door neighbour in a wheelchair being escorted to the same flight. She nearly had a fit when she saw us and muttered some tale about a bad back. Ever after, until we moved house, we amused ourselves by asking after her health every time we saw her.

Wondering

How do you know she did not have a bad back at the time? Maybe she had hurt it and was temporarily unable to walk far. Some people are embarrassed to be seen in a wheelchair, my husband hates it despite being genuinely disabled.

You can go through life thinking the best of people, or not.

Graham Beck

Not to mention the hazard in supermarkets. I was crashed into from behind and crushed into a display unit some months ago. Driver then reversed and ran into me again. Not good publicity for the supermarket who had a member of staff escorting this driver and they got me out of sight and off the premises as soon I could limp away. Doesn't anyone monitor the capabilities of the drivers?

Tim Broomer

They should have to take a test.

conedia

Does this include accidents in shopping centres and the like? Judging by how many pedestrians, especially children, I see come into contact with these scooters down shopping malls and in supermarkets, scattering all who dare stray in their path, I'm sure that these statistics are just the tip of the iceberg.

yorkist

I wonder how many of those users who drive their mobility scooters on the road would pass a driving test. Very slow moving vehicles on our roads will inevitably be a hazard. Perhaps some sort of test before these drivers are allowed on the road would be appropriate, or if that's too bureaucratic then keep them off the road and leave pedestrians to dodge them on the pavement!

Centerish

And especially an eyesight and hearing test. Also compulsory third party insurance.

Andrew Holliday

Where I live, mobility scooters have become a serious hazard. Put a 200kg lard bucket on an equally massive steel projectile, with consent to charge along the pavement at 15mph, and pit bull terriers are going to look slightly less dangerous.

It's socially unacceptable to drive a JCB through a pedestrian zone, just for fun. Why should it be alright to mow people down with one of these?

Alan Carter

@Andrew Holliday I don't disagree with your fundamental point but they have a top speed of 8mph and should be limited to 4mph on pavements so do not have consent to charge along at 15mph

SurreyBadger 2 days ago

They need a driving test!

